



Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments

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Regional Planning Committee

LOWER CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Monday, January 25, 2021 – 7:00 pm

Virtual Zoom Meeting

Members:

Chester	Mike Sanders *
	Cindy Lignar
Clinton	Alan Kravitz *
	Martin Jaffe
Cromwell	Nick Demetriades *
	Anthony LaCava *
Deep River	Bruce Edgerton *
	Tony Bolduc *
Durham	Frank DeFelice *
East Haddam	Crary Brownell
	Lou Salicrup
East Hampton	Michael Kowalczyk *
Essex	Jane Siris *
	Sandra Childress *
Haddam	Raul deBrigard *
	Maurice Adams *
Killingworth	Alec Martin *
	Stephanie Warren *
Lyme	Mary Stone *
	Humphrey Tyler*
Middlefield	Vacancy
Middletown	Beth Emery *
	Kellin Atherton *
Old Lyme	Harold Thompson
Old Saybrook	Karen Jo Marcolini
Portland	Mary Dickerson *
Westbrook	Bill Neale * (7:14)
	Marie Farrell

*Members Present

Staff Present:

Sam Gold
Torrance Downes
Megan Jouflas
Margot Burns
Eliza LoPresti

RiverRPC

Kevin Armstrong

Guests: None

1. Call to Order

Chairman DeFelice called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm. The meeting was conducted via Zoom.

2. Roll Call

Jane Siris of Essex was introduced as that town's new member.

3. Seating of Alternates

Maurice Adams (Haddam) was briefly seated until Raul deBrigard joined the meeting a minute later.

4. Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Kravitz moved to adopt the agenda; second by Ms. Emery. Vote was unanimous in favor.

5. Election of Officers

Mr. deBrigard nominated Ms. Stone as the temporary secretary to preside over the elections.

Ms. Dickerson moved to approve Ms. Stone as the temporary secretary; second by Mr. Martin. Vote was unanimous in favor.

Ms. Warren nominated Mr. DeFelice for Chairman; second by Mr. Martin. Vote was unanimous in favor.

Mr. DeFelice nominated Mr. deBrigard as Vice Chairman; second by Ms. Emery. Vote was unanimous in favor.

Mr. deBrigard nominated Mr. Edgerton as Secretary; second by Mr. DeFelice. Vote was unanimous in favor.

The slate of officers for 2021 is:

Chairman – Frank DeFelice

Vice Chairman – Raul deBrigard

Secretary – Bruce Edgerton

6. Public Comments – None

7. Approval of Minutes of Past Meetings

Mr. Neale moved to approve the November 23, 2020 meeting minutes; second by Ms. Emery. Vote was unanimous in favor.

8. Referrals – Update from Torrance

Mr. Downes reported that he wrote a review of the draft update of the Old Lyme POCD. Due to time constraints he did not bring this before the RPC prior to sending. The RPOCD is consistent with the State's, the RiverCOG RPOCD currently in production and with the POCDs of surrounding towns. He

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suggested strong language in support of the Gateway Commission regulations and affordable housing and possible removal of existing limitations on accessory dwellings/apartments.

Ms. Emery asked if Middletown’s POCD had been reviewed and commented upon; Mr. Downes will look into it.

Mr. Downes would like to put together notes on a few towns’ accessory apartment regulations to share with the committee members.

9. Regional Plan of Conservation & Development Discussion

a. Update on Thematic Workshops

Ms. Jouflas recapped the four virtual workshops held in December and January using the information in the existing conditions report and heard in the municipal meetings over the summer.

b. Identification of Regional Plan Themes

Ms. Jouflas explained a brief outline of the plan, the body of which will be broken into three to five key themes. Each themed section will consist of a vision statement, a brief SWOT analysis and goals and recommendations. The key themes will be overarching ideas that build toward the regional vision.

Suggested themes based on information obtained from all the workshops and municipal meetings were discussed. How individual ideas fit under each theme were discussed at length. The themes for the plan will be sustainable, innovative, community, connected.

c. Discussion of Regional Brand

During the process of working on the RPOCD the idea of branding emerged a few times. There was general consensus that we do not need to spend more time discussing a regional brand at this point. The plan will include a recommendation for additional branding exercises.

10. Miscellaneous: State, Regional and/or Local Planning Issues

Mr. Gold noted that RiverCOG’s new intern, Ben Lovejoy, has been tracking bills and will forward any relevant to planning on to the RPC members. He discussed OPM’s request for a report on regionalization of PSAPPs and tax assessment services by March 1. One report will be created by all the COGs as these are statewide issues. Mr. Gold also noted that RiverCOG has put out a RFP for a Regional Affordable Housing Plan.

Mr. deBrigard pointed out that everyone can easily participate in the public portion of the legislative process this session since it is virtual.

Mr. Neale was looking at water goals in the POCD for Westbrook and came across the CT Water Plan and was wondering if there is any flow between regional, state, local plans and utility plans. It can seem like all these entities make plans but don’t necessarily communicate them to each other. Part of the objectives of the CT Water Plan includes working with planning entities and preserving open space. Mr. Gold reported that there is not coordination between plans. The future land use map can help deal with features of utilities in the regional plan.

This was followed by a general discussion on utilities, pipelines and water accessibility. Ms. Emery pointed out that expansion of natural gas in the region goes against some of the state and local plans and goals.

11. Adjournment

Mr. deBrigard moved to adjourn at 9:04 pm; Ms. Emery seconded. Vote was unanimous in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Eliza LoPresti